

BOOK NOTICES

KINDSCHER, KELLY. 1992. **Medicinal Wild Plants of the Prairie. An Ethnobotanical Guide.** (ISBN 0-7006-0527-4, pbk.) University Press of Kansas, 2501 West 15th Street, Lawrence, KS 66049-3904. \$25.00 (hbk), \$9.95 (pbk). 340 pp.

The first part of this well-done, authoritative book considers 43 species in detail: common names, Indian names, scientific name, description, habitat, parts used, Indian use, Anglo folk use, medical history, scientific research, and cultivation (not all of these for every plant). A full-page line drawing illustrates each of these species. The second part, not illustrated, has brief accounts of 60 species less important as medicine. Range maps are given for all the book's species. Closing the volume are a glossary, 15 pages of references (ca. 240 entries), and an index. Data in the book are mainly historical; only a few of the species have been studied recently to learn what biologically active compounds they contain.—*John W. Thieret.*

WASOWSKI, SALLY and ANDY WASOWSKI. 1992. **Requiem for a Lawnmower.** (ISBN 0-87833-811-X, hbk.) Taylor Publishing Company, 1550 West Mockingbird Lane, Dallas, TX 75235. \$15.95 (hbk). 182 pp.

This book, written "with Andy Wasowski," is a series of essays about gardening with native plants. The book has a bias toward the Southwest, but the principles presented can be applied just about anywhere. Kinds of plants to use; why and how to use them; attracting hummingbirds; our lost native herbs; defending goldenrods (that they cause hayfever is a "scurrilous, unfounded charge"); trash trees (e.g., mimosa, Russian-olive, tree-of-heaven, Chinese tallowtree, white mulberry) to get rid of; creating habitats; desert gardens; a warning about misinformation in many gardening books; and even bladderworts (*Utricularia*), "a wonderful addition to a natural earthen water garden"—these and many other subjects are interestingly written about. Sixteen of the many plants discussed are illustrated with watercolors. The book, lacking an index, is well worth reading, even by non-gardeners.—*John W. Thieret.*

KIRKPATRICK, ZOE MERRIMAN. 1992. **Wildflowers of the Western Plains.** (ISBN 0-292-79061-9, hbk.) University of Texas Press, Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819. \$24.95. 240 pp.

TVETEN, JOHN and GLORIA TVETEN. 1993. **Wildflowers of Houston.** (ISBN 0-89263-319-0, pbk.) Rice University Press, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, TX 77251. \$18.50 (pbk), \$29.85 (hbk). 309 pp.

To paraphrase Ecclesiastes: of making many wildflower books there is no end. These two are fine examples of this genre. *Wildflowers of the Western Plains* illustrates about 180 species arranged alphabetically by family; its text includes, for each, detailed description of the plant, flower, and fruit; notes on range; and remarks. The composites occupy nearly 1/4 of the book, attesting to the prevalence of members of that family among at least the more showy flowers of the region. *Wildflowers of Houston* includes about 200 species grouped by flower color, briefer descriptions than *Western Plains*, and remarks. Both volumes are splendidly illustrated with color photographs of high quality. Both have a bibliography and a detailed index; *Western Plains* has a glossary. One can do naught but recommend these books highly.—*John W. Thieret.*